

At approximately 0315 hours local time on 17 February, Ministry of Interior police officers dispersed demonstrators at the Pearl Roundabout using tear gas. As of 0600 hours, Shaikh Khalifa Bin Salman highway was closed running from north to south, and Budaiya east of Jidhaf is closed. We are also aware of clashes of demonstrators and police near the Salmaniya hospital. There is no indication that this situation is directly threatening to or targeting westerners. Please avoid these areas. If you encounter a large public gathering or demonstration, depart the vicinity immediately.

We are not currently advising extra precautions beyond those listed in our last Demonstration Notice, the Country Specific Information for Bahrain, or the Worldwide Caution available at <http://bahrain.usembassy.gov>. We will continue to monitor the situation and send out further information as warranted.

We remind American citizens that even demonstrations intended to be peaceful can turn confrontational and possibly escalate into violence. American citizens are therefore urged to avoid the areas of demonstrations if possible, and to exercise caution if within the vicinity of any demonstrations. American citizens should stay current with media coverage of local events and be aware of their surroundings at all times.

For the latest security information, U.S. citizens living and traveling abroad should regularly monitor the Department of State's Bureau of Consular Affairs Internet website at <http://travel.state.gov>, where the current Worldwide Caution, Country Specific Information for Bahrain, Travel Warnings and Travel Alerts can be found. Up-to-date information on security can also be obtained by calling 1-888-407-4747 toll-free in the United States and Canada or, for callers outside the United States and Canada, a regular toll line at 1-202-501-4444. These numbers are available from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. Eastern Time, Monday through Friday (except U.S. federal holidays).

The U.S. Embassy in Manama can be reached at (973) 1724-2700; the afterhours emergency number is (973) 1724-2957; the fax number is (973) 1725-6242. The Embassy's web site, which includes consular information and the most recent messages to the American community in Bahrain, is at <http://bahrain.usembassy.gov>. The Consular Section can be reached at ManamaConsular@state.gov